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SUBJECT: SOVIET DELEGATION IN RADIO/TV

REF: A. MOSCOW 11266 B. MOSCOW 9728 C. STATE 190828

1. SUMMARY: THE SOVIET RADIO/TV DELEGATION VISIT TO THE U.S. WAS SOMETHING LESS THAN A ROARING SUCCESS. PROBLEMS RESULTED FROM MISHAPS IN PROGRAMMING, PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANTLY FROM THE ATTITUDES OF THE VISITORS THEMSELVES. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING TO DEPARTMENT ESCORT-INTERPRETER, SOVDEL REACTION TO THEIR PROGRAM AND VISIT TO U.S. WAS GENERALLY UNFAVORABLE. WHILE THE WASHINGTON, DC AND ATLANTA PORTIONS OF THE PROGRAM PROCEEDED SMOOTHLY, THERE WERE NUMEROUS LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS IN NEW YORK AND BOSTON ACCOMPANIED BY SOVIET CRITICISM OF SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM.

3. ACCORDING TO THE ESCORT-INTERPRETER AND THE NEW YORK

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RECEPTION CENTER, THE 15 DAY VISIT WAS CHARACTERIZED BY

CONTINUOUS HOSTILE CRITICISM OF THE U.S., ITS PEOPLE AND SYSTEM. EXAMPLES OF CRITICISMS REPORTED BY ESCORT-INTERPRETER ARE: "FOOD IS AWFUL," "PRICES OUTRAGEOUS," "PEOPLE DUMB." GRIGORIY SURENOVICH OGANOV, CHIEF OF THE

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE TELEVISION AND RADIO SECTION, WAS MORE VOCIFEROUS AND STRIDENT IN HIS CRITICISMS THAN THE OTHER SOVDEL MEMBER, YURIY ALEKSANDROVICH LETUNOV, CHIEF NEWS EDITOR, SOVIET RADIO. ESCORT-INTERPRETER CLAIMS THAT IN HIS 20 YEARS OF WORKING FOR THE DEPARTMENT, HE HAS NEVER HAD SUCH AN UNPLEASANT DELEGATION. IN NEW YORK THE SOVIETS SUMMARILY DISMISSED THE ESCORT-INTERPRETER, STATING THEY NO LONGER DESIRED HIS SERVICES.

4. I WASHINGTON, DC, THE ONLY ADDITION TO THE PROGRAM PREARRANGED BY THE VISITOR PROGRAM SERVICE (VPS) WAS A VISIT TO THE RE-ELECT THE PRESIDENT NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS.

5. IN ATLANTA, THE SOVDEL WAS SCHEDULED TO MEET CARTER'S PRINCIPAL CAMPAIGN ADVISER BUT THIS WAS CANCELED BY THE CARTER OFFICE DUE TO CHANGES IN HIS SCHEDULE. INSTEAD, A VISIT WAS ARRANGED TO A FORD MOTOR CO ASSEMBLY PLANT. AT COCA COLA, THE SOVDEL LUNCHEDED WITH A VICE PRESIDENT. IN CUMMINGS, GA, THEY MET THE RADIO STATION HEAD OF WSNE AND GAVE AN INTERVIEW (NOT AIRED WHILE THEY WERE IN ATLANTA), AND MET THE CUMMINGS MAYOR.

6. PROBLEMS STARTED TO SURFACE IN NYC WHERE THEY STAYED AT APARTMENT OF CORRESPONDENT LIPOVETSKY (REF C PARA 3). LIPOVETSKY INSISTED ON BEING INCLUDED IN ALL OF THEIR VISITS AND APPOINTMENTS, AND WHEN THE NY RECEPTION CENTER REPRESENTATIVE EXPLAINED THAT HIS INCLUSION WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE IN CERTAIN CASES (REF C PARA 3), THE SOVDEL BALKED AT GOING TO THOSE PLACES. IT APPEARS LIPOVETSKY DISCOURAGED THE SOVDEL FROM GOING PLACES WHERE HE COULD NOT ACCOMPANY THEM. A VISIT TO THE STUDIO OF ABC'S "GOOD MORNING AMERICA" WAS ARRANGED, BUT THE DELEGATION DECIDED NOT TO FOLLOW THROUGH--FORTUITOUSLY, FOR ONE OF THE GUESTS ON THE SHOW TURNED OUT TO BE NUREYEV. IT MAY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BE THAT THEY HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT NUREYEV WOULD APPEAR. RECEPTION CENTER PERSONNEL HAD TRIED TO FIND OUT FROM ABC IN ADVANCE WHO WOULD BE ON THE PROGRAM BUT WERE UNABLE TO DO SO. A MORE LIKELY REASON IS THAT LIPOVETSKY HAD BEEN REFUSED PERMISSION TO ACCOMPANY THEM. A VISIT TO THE STUDIO OF A POLITICAL CARTOONIST WAS DROPPED DUE TO LACK OF TIME AND INTEREST ON THE PART OF OGANOV.

7. THE BOSTO PROGRAM HAD MINOR PROBLEMS. SCHEDULES WERE NOT AVAILABLE ON ARRIVAL AT THE HOTEL BECAUSE THE HOTEL HAD MISPLACED THEM. IN ONE INSTANCE A MAP WAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PACKET THAT WAS CRUCIAL TO FINDING SOMEPLACE ON THE PROGRAM. ON THE SECOND MORNING, A LOCAL HOST DID NOT SHOW TO TAKE THE SOVDEL TO A PLACE ON THE PROGRAM. IN ALL THESE INSTANCES THE ESCORT-INTERPRETER SALVAGED THE SITUATION BUT THEY SERVED TO ADD FUEL TO OGANOV'S STEADY STREAM OF PETTY CRITICISMS. THE LAST STRAW WAS THE PRESENCE, AT A RECEPTION SPONSORED BY THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART, OF THREE RECENT SOVIET EMIGRE/DISSIDENTS. WHILE THE ESCORT-INTERPRETER DID NOT NOTE ANY PERSONAL CONTACT OR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE SOVDEL AND THE EMIGRES, OGANOV DID COMPLAIN ABOUT THEIR PRESENCE LATER AND CHARGED THE BOSTON PROGRAM WAS ARRANGED THROUGH THE CIA OR FBI, AND CONSTITUTED A PLOT TO EMBARRASS THE SOVDEL.

8. COMMENT: THESE MINOR FAILURES IN PROGRAMMING DID NOTHING TO IMPROVE THE APPARENTLY CRITICAL AND DEFENSIVE ATTITUDE WHICH THE SOVDEL SHOWED THROUGHOUT THE VISIT. THE VISIT DEMONSTRATED THAT SUCH UNDERTAKINGS ARE NOT WITHOUT THEIR RISKS. OUR HOPE IS, NEVERTHELESS, THAT THE VISIT, DESPITE PROBLEMS, MADE SOME DENT IN THE SOVIET DELEGATION'S IDEOLOGICALLY-PURE VIEW OF THE U.S. HABIB

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